



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,364	08/22/2003	Jere R. Anderson	T0428.70146US00	8634
7590	12/01/2006			
			EXAMINER	
			KUHNS, ALLAN R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1732	

DATE MAILED: 12/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/646,364	ANDERSON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Allan Kuhns	1732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 September 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-58 and 76-106 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-58 and 76-106 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 - Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 - Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 - Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 - Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-19, 23-36 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noel et al. (5,904,965) as set forth in the previous Office action.

3. Claims 20-22, 37-39, 41-58 and 76-106 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dumbauld (5,070,111).

4. Applicants' arguments filed September 18, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants assert that it appears that the water absorption testing described in Noel and Dumbauld was conducted without any vacuum being applied. Applicants then argue that, in the context of the present application, "complete submersion water absorption" is measured by completely immersing an entire sample in water under high vacuum and that the absence of vacuum in the testing described by Noel and Dumbauld would be expected to lead to significantly lower water absorption values as compared to values measured with applied vacuum. This is not persuasive because the instant claim language requires "complete submersion" and the Noel reference describes use of enough water to "completely submerge" each sample at column 19, lines 2 and 3, and it is submitted that "immersing" as used by Dumbauld at column 3, line 47 would be interpreted by one of ordinary skill in the art as requiring complete submersion.

Applicants also sees no reason why the claimed U-test water absorption would have been met in Dumbauld, particularly since the water absorption appears to have been done without any vacuum applied. But it is noted by the examiner that the claims at issue require "a U-test". One reason why Dumbauld's sample would meet the U-test requirement is that the ends of the sample are not submerged in conducting this test. In addition, Dumbauld notes at column 3, lines 48-50 that use of a foam with a high number of closed cells leads to low values of water absorption.

5. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Allan Kuhns whose telephone number is (571) 272-1202. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 7:00 to 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christina Johnson, can be reached on (571) 272-1176. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Allan R. Kuhns

ALLAN R. KUHNS AU 1732

PRIMARY EXAMINER

11-22-06